

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

2018

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

No experience necessary, one-time volunteers are welcome. Tools, training, and supplies will be provided. Held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, 9-11:30am.

Garlic Mustard Pulling

March 27 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Volunteers pull out Garlic mustard alongside our trails each spring. Our goal is to maintain all previously cleared patches and to find and remove any new or remaining satellite mustard invasions. This yearly removal effort restricts the plants' further spread. Participants are encouraged to wear long pants and closed toe shoes.

Garlic Mustard Pulling & Spring Flower Watching

April 24 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

A significant amount of time will be spent pulling up invasive Garlic mustard but we will also search for and identify many species of spring ephemeral flowers. With luck, our trip will coincide with the annual showing of gorgeous Virginia bluebell blooms nearby the river. The walking route is determined by where we find the mustard. Plan on spending the first half of the morning removing invasive mustard and the latter half finding wildflowers.

Shrub Planting & Sheltering

May 22 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Non-native, invasive plants are a persistent threat to our habitat restoration efforts, particularly within our shrub-planting sites. Several vines and vine-like plants are the worst offenders, strangling and suffocating our young, woody plants. Come out and assist us with maintaining affected shelters. Then we'll plant and shelter even more native shrubs.

Barberry Digging

June 26 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Japanese barberry is a formidable foe of the environmental area. Controlling this nuisance plant requires continued efforts every year. Luckily our steadfast helpers are adept at removing it. On this day, we'll dig, yank and wrench these spiny shrubs from the ground. Long pants and shirt sleeves are a must!

Autumn Olive Reduction

September 25 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

Autumn olive shrubs are an unwelcome but plentiful remnant of the game farm that once existed in this area. Autumn olive is a relentless invader requiring the implementation of a variety of control methods over several years. We have made great headway in a several-acre area that we will expand upon this morning. Volunteers will cut down the olives to provide room for park staff to return and perform subsequent herbicide treatments. Any Japanese barberry shrubs found will also be dug-up and left to dry out.

Planting Session

October 23 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

For the past three years, volunteers have worked diligently to clear out invasive Autumn olive shrubs from a portion of forest understory situated between two legs of the South Wind Trail. Now there is enough cleared land to plant a mixture of native plants that belong in the forest. During this event, we will install and shelter a small variety of native trees and shrubs while discussing and observing the results of all the prior hard work by our volunteers to prepare for this occasion.

Autumn Olive Reduction

November 27 / South Wind Circle Trailhead

We have been fighting invasive Autumn olive since the park opened. For this gathering, we will continue our work battling this woody pest. Our efforts will remain focused on expanding the same forest understory area treated in September.

Information

Jeff Claffy, Assistant Natural Resources Manager, MPEA, 410-313-6209
or jclaffy@howardcountymd.gov.



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UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

MASTER
GARDENER 

The Conservation Stewardship Project, a joint program of the Howard County Master Gardeners and the Howard County Recreation & Parks, addresses the problem of controlling invasive exotic species in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA). Volunteer work dates occur monthly from March through November, skipping July and August. Each event includes an educational component concerning the target invasive species or work area for the day.

The MPEA, established in 1996, is 1,021 acres in size and contains a diversity of habitat types. There are upland and bottomland hardwood forest, fields, wetlands, ponds and riparian habitats. The primary components of the MPEA's mission are natural resources management, education, research and recreation.

Driving Directions:

South Wind Circle Entrance to MPEA

Route 29 to Route 108 west towards Clarksville, or Route 32 to Route 108 east. Turn onto Trotter Road to South Wind Circle (about 1 mile). Enter the circle and proceed to trailhead on left (opposite Misty Top Pass).

Due to limited parking, we strongly encourage carpooling.

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